

absorbed from the group. Like honor, however, it calls for an individual reaction of assent and dissent, and becomes an individual trait or possession in the form which it ultimately takes. 503. The great variety *in* the codes. All the topics which have been treated in this chapter are branches or outreachings of the social code. They show how deep is the interest of human beings in the sex taboo, and in the self-perpetuation of society. Men have always tried, and are trying still, to solve the problem of well living in this respect. The men, the women, the children, and the society have joint and several interests, and the complication is great. At the present time population, race, marriage, child-birth, and the education of children present us our greatest problems and most unfathomable mysteries. All the contradictory usages of chastity, decency, propriety, etc., have their sense in some assumed relation to the welfare of society. To some extent they have come out of caprice, but chiefly they have issued from experience of good and ill, and are due to efforts to live well. Thus we may discern in them policies and philosophies, but they never proceed to form any such generalities as do rationally adopted motives. There is logic in the folkways, but never rationality. Given the premises, in a notion of kin, for instance, and the deductions are made directly and generally correctly, but the premises could never be verified, and they were oftener false than true. Each group took its own way, making its own assumptions, and following its own logic. So there was great variety and discord in their policies and philosophies, but within the area of a custom, during its dominion, its authority is absolute; and hence, although the usages are infinitely

various, directly
contradictory, and mutually abominable, they are,
within their
area of dominion, of equal value and force, and
they are the
standards of what is true and right. The groups
have often
tried to convert each other by argument and
reason. They have
never succeeded. Each one's reasons are the
tradition which it
has received from its ancestors. That does not
admit of argu-
ment. Each tries to convince the other by going
outside of the
tradition to some philosophic standard of truth.
Then the tradi-
tion is left in full force. Shocking as it must be to
any group